Middle Europe between East and West,

Cosmic and Human History Volume 6

Dr. Rudolf Steiner

Middle Europe between East and West,

Cosmic and Human History Volume 6

Dr. Rudolf Steiner

Table of Contents

Michael’s Battle and Its Reflection on Earth 1
Michael’s Battle and Its Reflection on Earth 2
The Weaving and Living Activity of the Human Etheric Bodies

Michael’s Battle and Its Reflection on Earth 1

AT THE PRESENT time of severe trials it must be quite natural to anyone who has a heartfelt interest in the endeavors of anthroposophical spiritual science to reflect upon the relations existing between the fact that this spiritual-scientific movement started at the beginning of the twentieth century to send its impulses into the evolution of mankind and the other fact that mankind of the present age has been engulfed by catastrophic events. How catastrophic these events are for mankind has not yet been fully understood, for people are accustomed today to a life without the spirit. To live without the spirit, however, is to live superficially; and to live superficially causes human beings to sleep away the important impressions of the events taking place around them. To sleep through important events is a special characteristic of the human being of the present age. There are few people today who arrive at an adequate conception of the severity and incisiveness of present-day events. Most of them live from day to day. If an attempt is made to speak of a time which might come later, people — and in many instances precisely those upon whom matters depend — reject it most violently. If among its many tasks spiritual science succeeds in making the human soul more energetic, more awake, it will have fulfilled an important one for our present time. Spiritual-scientific concepts demand a greater exertion of thinking, a greater intensity of feeling than is employed in other concepts, particularly those current in our time.

It is important today to become acquainted with the concepts of spiritual research which can direct and guide us in the understanding of the present age in the most comprehensive sense. Today I shall develop some fundamental concepts upon which we shall build ideas in our next lecture which will throw light upon important factors of the present age. I shall proceed from more general thoughts, touching upon the personal in man, which, from a certain point of view, will furnish the foundation for our subsequent spiritual-scientific considerations.

My dear friends, in the course of our spiritual-scientific studies we must, again and again, emphasize the fact that a change in our state of consciousness runs through our life between birth or conception and death: the change between sleeping and waking. In a general sense, we know the difference between sleeping and waking; in a more intimate way, only spiritual-scientific perception is able to demonstrate to the human soul the true difference between sleeping and waking. In ordinary life we believe that we sleep from falling asleep until awakening, and that we are awake from awakening until falling asleep. But this is only an approximate truth. In reality, the boundary between sleeping and waking is incorrectly drawn. For the state of dull consciousness, which in many respects is unconsciousness, through which we pass as the sleep state extends into our day life; we are also within this state with a part of our being between awakening and

falling asleep. We are by no means awake with our entire being between awakening and falling asleep; we are awake only with a part of it and another part continues to sleep even though we consider ourselves to be awake. We are always, in a certain respect, sleeping human beings. It is really so. We are really awake only in regard to our perception and our thinking. By perceiving the external world through our senses, by hearing, seeing, and perceiving. We are completely awake there. We are also awake, although to a lesser degree, in thinking, visualizing. When we form thoughts, when visualizations arise in us, when memories emerge out of the dark recesses of our soul life, we are awake in regard to the processes which we experience. We are awake in regard to the processes of perception and thinking.

You know, however, that besides perception and thinking, our soul life contains feeling and willing. In regard to feeling we are not awake, even though we believe we are. The degree, the intensity of consciousness we have while feeling equals the degree and intensity of consciousness we have while dreaming. And just as dreams arise as pictures out of the unconscious recesses of our souls, so do feelings arise as forces in us. In feeling we are awake to the same degree as in dreaming; the only difference is this: we carry our dreams over from sleep into ordinary waking consciousness, remembering them and thus distinguishing them from the waking state, while in the case of feelings all this takes place

simultaneously. Feeling itself is being dreamt in us, but we accompany our feeling with our conceptions. Feeling is not within the conceptions, but we look from conceptions upon feeling just as we look back, after awakening, upon the dream. And since we do this, simultaneously in the case of feeling, we are not aware of the fact that we have only the *conception of feeling* in actual consciousness, while feeling itself remains in the dream region, like any dream.

And will itself, my dear friends! What do you know of the process occurring when you resolve to take hold of a book and your hand then actually seized the book? What do you know of that which takes place between your conscious thought: “I want to take hold of the book,” and the mysterious processes then occurring in your organism? We know what we *think* about willing, but *willing itself* remains unknown to us in ordinary consciousness. Whereas we “dream away” our feeling, we “sleep away” the actual, essential content of our willing.

Through perception and thinking we learn to know a world around us which we designate as the physical-sense world; through feeling and willing we do not learn to know the world in which we exist as feeling and willing human beings. We are constantly in a super-sensible world; the forces of our feeling and willing originate in this super-sensible world, just as our perception and thinking originate in the physical world. We

have no bodily organs for feeling and willing; we do have bodily organs for perception and thinking. Many physiologists believe that organs for feeling and willing exist; this shows that they do not know what they are talking about. Physiologists who really *think* do not believe this.

What I have described above is the ordered state in which we live between birth and death, a state in which we are awake in regard to perception and thinking, but asleep in regard to feeling and willing.

The condition is different between death and a new birth; it is reversed, in a certain sense. We begin then to be awake in regard to our feeling and willing, and we sleep away our perception, our thinking, although sleep is a different state in the world in which we then dwell with our souls. From what I have just stated you will see that the so-called dead are different from the so-called living in that the so-called living sleep away feeling and willing which constantly stream through their being; the dead stand within this feeling and willing. It will not be difficult for you to understand that the dead dwell in the same world in which we dwell as the so-called living. We are separated from the dead merely because we do not perceive the world in which they live and weave. The dead are always around us; we are surrounded also by those being who live without having physically incarnated. We only fail to perceive them.

You need only form the conception of a human being sleeping in a room: objects are around him, but he does not perceive them. The fact that something is not perceived is no proof that it is not there. In regard to the world of the dead we are in exactly the same position in which we are in regard to the world of physical beings while we sleep. We live in the same world with the dead and with the higher hierarchies: they are in our midst, but we are separated from them merely through the nature of our consciousness.

My dear friends, from this it follows that the human being perceives and understands only a part of that reality within which he actually exists. If the human being were to grasp full reality, his knowledge would be quite different from what it is today. This knowledge, then, would be comprised not only of the forces that come from the kingdom of nature known to us, but also of the forces of the higher spiritual beings and the forces that come from the realm of the so-called dead. Today these facts are considered extremely grotesque by the great majority of people. Yet, for ever wider circles of mankind and especially for those whose concern it is to be interested in the evolution and progress of human life these ideas should become a matter that must be penetrated by cognition. For right up to our time, more or less, the human being was guided by dark, unknown forces in regard to all that he cannot perceive in his surroundings. Guidance by these obscure, unknown forces has more or less ceased in our age. (We

shall have to speak about this in our next lecture.) Today the human being must enter into conscious relationship with certain forces which reach over into our world from the realm of the so-called dead. — It will not be easy to make human beings conscious of these things to the degree that is necessary in order to put the real, the true in the place of the fantastic inadequateness which pervades our age and which has brought about such great catastrophes. In regard to this I should like to draw your attention to only one point, on fact:

Among the many so-called “scientific” courses there are historical studies. History is taught and studied in schools. But what is this history? Any well-informed person who is acquainted with the literature of earlier times knows that what today is called the science of history is not much more than a hundred years old. I do not want to say more about this. People consider and write history with the same thoughts and concepts they employ in external ordinary life when observing nature. But no one asks whether it is permissible to observe historical life in the same way one observes external nature. It is not permissible. For the historical life of mankind is governed by impulses which cannot be grasped with the concepts of our waking consciousness. Anyone who is really able to observe history knows that we are governed by impulses in historical life which, for ordinary consciousness, are only accessible to the dream state. Just as mankind dreams away the life of feeling, so it dreams away the

impulses of history. If we attempt to observe the historical life of mankind with the concepts which are excellent for natural science, we cannot truly grasp it: we observe it only on its surface. What is it that is taught and studied as history in the schools? It is nothing more, in regard to real history, than the description of a corpse is in regard to the whole human being. History as it is taught today is the study of a corpse. The study of history must undergo a complete transformation. In the future it will only be possible to understand what works in history with inspired concepts, with inspiration. Then we shall have *true* history. Then we shall know what is in that governs mankind, what it is that works from historical life into social life.

My dear friends, what I am stating here has a deep significance. People think they understand social-historical life. They do not understand it, because they want to grasp it with the ordinary concepts of daily waking life. This does not become evident when history is written, for little seems to depend upon whether or not the facts are actually true. I should like to give you an example of this: We learn from history books that America was discovered in 1492. Generally speaking, this is correct; but from what is thus written in history books we form the conception that prior to 1492 America was completely unknown, as far as we may go back in history. But this is not the case. America was unknown for only a few centuries. Still in the twelfth and thirteenth

centuries there existed a lively traffic between Iceland, Ireland and America. Medical herbs and other goods were imported into Europe from America. For certain reasons connected with the inner karma of Europe and the early role of Ireland, Rome made every possible effort to cut Europe off from America so that America would be forgotten. This effort on the part of Rome was not detrimental to European conditions at the time; it was well meant.

I only intend to show by this example that a fact need not necessarily be a historical fact; that we may be completely ignorant historically regarding an important matter.

To have historical knowing or to be historically ignorant in regard to the social life of mankind is, on the other hand, of great importance. How often today do we hear people say: we must think thus and so about this or that event because history teaches thus and so. Take modern literature, especially present-day magazines and newspapers and you will see how often the phrase is employed: “History teaches thus and so,” The human being partly sleeps away the historical events in the midst of which he lives, but he nevertheless forms a judgment about them or one is inculcated in him. The phrase: “history teaches thus and so” is very frequently heard, and at the beginning of the war, important men states what history taught them concerning the duration of the war. It was the honest conviction of the so-

called “clever people” that, according to the general social and economic conditions of the earth, the war could not last longer than from four to six months! The outcome of this prophecy was similar to that of another historical prophecy made by a much greater spirit, to be sure, but which was formed by the ordinary conceptions of ever-day consciousness. Such conceptions cannot lay hold of history, because history is dreamt away, even partly slept away. It can only be grasped with great concepts. When Friedrich von Schiller became professor of philosophy at the University of Jena, he delivered his world-famous inaugural speech about the study of history. This was shortly before the outbreak of the French Revolution. He stated his conviction derived from history but gained with ordinary concepts. I am not quoting literally, but the following is what Schiller, who certainly was not an insignificant personality, propounded as his conviction: History teaches that many quarrels and wars occurred in ancient times, and from what took place then we can expect disharmony among the European peoples in the future. They will, however, consider themselves members of a great family and will no longer tear each other to pieces. — thus Friedrich von Schiller. Shortly thereafter in 1789, the French Revolution broke out. All that befell the European family of peoples in the nineteenth century, and what is happening now, so many years later, has certainly annihilated the co-called historical judgment of Schiller in a most thorough fashion.

History will only teach us something if we are able to penetrate it with inspired concepts. For the historical life of mankind is influenced not only by the so-called living, but by the souls of the dead, by the spirits with whom the so-called dead live, just as we live with the beings of the animal, plant, and mineral realms. Mankind attaches great value to mere phrases. But it must wean itself from this habit. It can do so only if it acquires true concepts, concepts permeated with reality. A very important concept is that which shows us that we are separated from the so-called dead only through our consciousness which is a sleeping consciousness in regard to the world of feeling and willing in which the dead surround us. It is a sleeping consciousness similar to the consciousness in which we dwell between falling asleep and awakening as regards the physical objects around us.

Clairvoyant consciousness confirms, step by step, that which has been characterized here in general terms.

The question, however, may arise: How is it that the human being knows nothing about the world in which he lives, through which he passes with every step of his life? Well, my dear friends, the very way in which clairvoyant consciousness offers concrete enlightenment concerning the intercourse with the so-called dead is the living proof of the fact that for ordinary consciousness the world in which the dead live must remain unknown. I need only relate some of the characteristic

traits of this intercourse with the so-called dead which may take place with developed clairvoyant consciousness, and you will see from this why we know nothing in ordinary life about this intercourse with the dead. It is possible — although it is, in a certain respect, a very delicate matter — still, it is possible that the world of the dead may lay itself open to awakened consciousness, that the world of the dead may be perceived by the human being, that he may enter into conscious relationship with the individual dead person. The human being must, however, acquire a completely different consciousness if he wishes to enter into an actual and secure relation with the dead person. He must acquire a consciousness which is completely different form the one employed in the physical world. Let me describe here a few characteristic traits.

In the physical world we have certain habits in our relation to another human being. If I speak to someone here on the physical plane, ask him something, communicate something to him, I am conscious of the fact that the speech proceeds from my soul, through my speech organs, and passes over to him. I am conscious of the fact that I speak. I am conscious of this fact also in regard to external perception. And if this other human being here on the physical plane answers me or communicates something to me, then I hear his words, his words sound out to me.

This is not the case in fully conscious intercourse with the dead. (In half-conscious intercourse the matter is somewhat different, but I am speaking here of fully conscious intercourse.) In fully conscious intercourse with the dead matters are reversed. They are quite different from what we expect. When I confront the dead person, he speaks in his soul what I intend to ask him or what I wish to communicate to him: this sounds out to me from *him*. And what he intends to say to me sounds out of my *own* soul. We have to become accustomed to this, my dear friends. We must accustom ourselves to hearing what the other person says as sounding out of the spiritual outer world. This is so different from everything we are accustomed to experience here in the physical world that it does not occur to us at all to take any stand in regard to it. For just consider the following: At one time or another in life something speaks within your soul. You certainly will ascribe it to yourself. The human being is in certain respects egotistical, and if something arises within his soul he is inclined to ascribe it to his own imagination, to his own genius. We only learn to recognize through clairvoyant consciousness that much that arises in our souls is in truth told us by the dead. The realm of the dead constantly plays into our will, into our feeling. Something arises in us which we may call a good idea: in truth it is a communication from the dead. We also are unfamiliar with the other aspect of the matter and pay no attention to what may appear, out of the grey spiritual environment, as if it were our own thoughts

surrounding us. If a human being can be sufficiently objective in regard to his own thoughts to experience them as if they were hovering around him, then the dead understand these thoughts.

It is true that the human being, even in ordinary consciousness, is in connection with the dead, but he does not become aware of it because he is not able to interpret the facts which I have just described. For we must realize that besides sleeping, waking and dreaming, we have two other states of consciousness. We have two other, extraordinarily important states of consciousness, but we pay not attention to them in ordinary life. We fail to pay attention to them for a certain reason which you will appreciate at once when I name these two states of consciousness: we have the state of falling asleep and the state of waking up. They are of short duration and pass so quickly that we pay no attention to their content. But the most important things occur at the moment of falling asleep and the moment of waking up. If we learn to know the real nature of these two moments, we all, in a certain respect, acquire the right concepts concerning the relationship of the human being to the world in which the dead co-exist with us.

Man is constantly in connection with the world of the dead, and this connection is especially vivid at the moment of falling asleep and the moment of waking up. Clairvoyant

consciousness shows that at the moment of falling asleep the human being is especially fitted to ask questions of the dead, give information to the dead; in general, to turn to the dead. At the moment of waking up the human being is especially fitted to receive communications, messages from the dead. He receives them rapidly and since he wakes up directly afterwards, they pass him by quickly and the tumult of waking life drowns them out. Not so long ago, more primitive people in their atavistic state knew these facts and they hinted at them; but under the influence of our materialistic culture such things perish even in remote regions. Anyone who grew up among the old peasants in rural districts knows that one of their fundamental rules was that on awakening in the morning one should remain quiet for a moment and refrain from looking out of the window into the light. These people tried to protect what worked upon the soul at the moment of waking from the rush and turmoil of waking life; they tried to remain quiet for a moment in their darkened room and not look out of the window immediately upon awaking.

It is not too difficult to observe that the moments of waking up and of falling asleep are of a quite special character. But in order to become aware of such things we need a certain wakefulness of thinking. Wakefulness of thinking is a faculty which has never been lacking to such an extent as it is today. I could give you grotesque examples of this. Let me quote one of the banal examples that permeate every-day life and can

be met at every turn, as it were.

A few days ago I noticed an advertisement in a newspaper which filled about one eighth of the page. It advertised the wide-spread Memory Course of a man called Poehlmann. It stated that only by employing the method of Herr Poehlmann was it possible to gain influence over other people. No other method would do. I am not speaking now about whether it is permissible or not, whether it is right or wrong to try to “gain influence” over other people; this does not concern us at the moment. I am drawing your attention to the form of the advertisement. It stated: Certain people pretend to be able to gain influence over others by means of personal magnetism or by strengthening this or that force in human nature. It can easily be proved that these people do not speak the truth, for not one will be able to say that he succeeded through his personal influence in making Mr. Rothschild, or any other rich man, give him a million dollars. Since it is a proven fact that this did not occur — and it certainly would have been tried had there been a chance of success — it is also a proven fact that no influence may be gained over people by this method. Influence may only be gained on the path of science and education. — And then the method of Poehlmann is described.

Now we know that quite a number of people will become convinced through this advertisement that all other methods

of trying to influence people are useless, for, has it not been proved that they were unable to influence Mr. Rothschild to leave them his millions? But how many people are there, you may ask yourselves, who read this advertisement and at once raise the objection: does this Poehlmann have students who succeeded in gaining Rothschild's millions? You need only ask yourselves to how many people this obvious thought will occur!

This is a trivial example, but an example which shows you how thinking fails to wake up in regard to what we read. I have chosen this example, first, because of its every-day character, and secondly, because it goes without saying that among those present there is nobody who would fail to observe that even this Poehlmann did not succeed in getting the millions. It is a foregone conclusion that all those who would be taken in by such an advertisement are not present here, and out of politeness I do not mention an example which could appeal to any of my present hearers! But what I want to say is that from morning to night, people read these things. It occurs in countless instances. They say: We pay not attention to them. Is that really so? The other day I read a speech in which the following sentence occurred: "Our relationship with a certain country is the core which must give the direction to our politics in the future." Just imagine the construction of this thought: a "relationship' is a "core" which becomes a "direction"! People who think like this are in a position to do all

kinds of things in life! But we do not notice the connections that exist between such crippled thinking and the public life.

It is necessary today to pay attention to this lack of wakefulness in thinking which is a mark of our culture. To have thoughts that can be carried out: this is the first demand if we wish to become aware of the revelations of the moments of going to sleep and of awakening.

I once listened to an address by a very famous professor of literature and history; it was his inaugural address and he tried his best. He formulated all kinds of literary-historical questions and at the conclusion he said: You see, gentlemen, I have led you into a forest of question marks. — I pictured it to myself: a forest of question marks? Just think: a forest of *question marks*!

Only he who is accustomed to carrying through the concepts which arise in him, that is, he who develops wakefulness in his thinking, is prepared to pay attention to such things as the moments of waking up and falling asleep. However, even though something is not perceived, it nevertheless exists. And the intercourse between the human being and the dead exists and is especially strong at the moment of falling asleep and at the moment of waking up. In reality, every human being poses countless questions and gives information to his beloved dead at the moment of falling

asleep and receives messages and answers from them at the moment of waking up. This intercourse with the dead, however, may be cultivated in a certain way. We have previously described several ways of cultivating it; today we shall add the following:

There is a certain difference in regard to the thoughts which will lead us to a relation with a dead person at the moment of falling asleep; not every thought is equally suitable. Anyone who does not merely lead a sensual-egotistical life will, out of a healthy feeling, have the longing not to interrupt the relation which karma has brought him with certain personalities who have now passed through the portal of death. He certainly will frequently connect his thoughts with these personalities. And the thoughts which we connect with our conception of the departed personalities may produce an actual intercourse with the dead; even though we are unable to pay attention to what happens at the moment of falling asleep. Certain thoughts, however, are more favorable than others for such an intercourse. Abstract thoughts, thoughts which we form with a certain indifference, even perhaps only from a sense of duty, are little suited to pass over to the dead at the moment of falling asleep. But thoughts, concepts, which arise from the experience of a special interest which united us in life are well suited to pass over to the dead. If we remember the dead person in such a way that we do not merely think of him with abstract thoughts and cold concepts, but recall a moment

when we grew warm at his side, when he told us something dear to our heart; if we remember the moments we have lived through with him in a community of feeling, and in a community of willing; if we remember the times we undertook and decided something together which we both valued and which led us to a common action — in short, something which made our hearts beat as one; if we recall vividly this mutual beating of our hearts: then all this colors our thought of the departed one so it is able to stream over to him at our next moment of falling asleep. It does not matter whether we have this thought at nine in the morning, at noon, or at two in the afternoon. We may have it at any time during the day: it will remain and stream over to the dead person at the moment of our falling asleep.

At the moment of waking up we may, in turn, receive answers, messages from the departed one. It does not necessarily have to be at the moment of waking up that this arises in our soul, since we may be unable to pay attention to it then; but in the course of the day something may arise in our soul in the form of a good idea, an inspiration, we might say, if we believe in such things. But also in regard to this certain conditions are more favorable, others less so. Under certain conditions it is easier for the dead to find access to our soul. The conditions are favorable if we have acquired a clear conception of the being of the departed one, if we were so deeply interested in his being that it really stood before our

spiritual eye. You will ask: Why does he say that? I someone was close to us we certainly have a conception of his being! — I do not believe this at all, my dear friends. People pass one another in our time and know each other very, very little. This may not alienate us from the other being here in the physical world; but it alienates us from the being who dwells in the world of the dead. Here in the physical world there are numerous unconscious and subconscious forces and impulses which bring people close to one another, even though they do not want to learn to know each other. It is supposed to happen in life, as some of you probably have read, that people may be married for decades and yet have very little knowledge of one another! In such cases the impulses which bring these people together do not rest upon mutual knowledge. Life is permeated everywhere by subconscious or unconscious impulses. These subconscious impulses bind us together here on earth, but they do not bind us to the being who has passed through death before us. In order to effect such a connection it is necessary that we have received into our soul something through which the being of the departed one lives vividly in us. And the more vividly it lives in us, the easier it is for that being to have access to our soul; the easier it is for him to communicate with us.

This is what I wanted to tell you about the intercourse, constantly occurring, between the so-called living and the so-called dead. Every one of us is in constant intercourse with

the so-called dead, but the reason we do not know it is that we are unable to observe sufficiently the moment of falling asleep, the moment of waking up. I have told you all this in order to give a more concrete form to your connection with the super-sensible world in which the dead dwell. This connection will take on a still more definite shape if we consider the following relationships:

The young die and the old die. The death of younger people is different from the death of older people in its relation to the living human beings they leave behind. Such things can only be discussed if it is possible to focus one's attention upon definite individual conditions in this field. I describe this not out of a general knowledge, but as a summary of what has actually occurred in definite individual cases. If clairvoyant consciousness observes what happens when children die, when young people leave their parents and family and pass through the portal of death, and if one learns to know how these souls live on, the knowledge which thus arises may be summarized in the following words:

The consciousness of these young people that have passed through the gate of death may be characterized by saying that they are not lost to the living; they remain here, they remain in the neighborhood, in the being of those they have left behind. For a long time these young people do not separate from those they have left behind; they remain within

their sphere — The matter is different in the case of older people that have died. It is easiest to express these things epigrammatically. The souls of these human beings who have died in the later years of their lives do not lose, on their part, the souls of those who have stayed behind. Thus, while those who have remained behind do not lose the younger souls, the older people, after having passed through death's door, do not lose the souls of the living in spite of the latter's being here on earth. They take along with them, as it were, what they wish to have from us. It is easy for them to do so; while the souls of younger people can have what they need from us only if they remain more or less within the sphere of the survivors. And this is just what they do.

It is possible to study these relationships in a way that will ascertain the facts I have just described. The study will, of course, have to be carried out with clairvoyant consciousness. If clairvoyant consciousness studies grief and the pain of separation, it will find that these are two completely different states. Human beings do not know this, but if one observes the grief, the sorrow in the soul of a person over a deceased child, one will find it something quite different from the grief and sorrow which may be observed if an older person has died. Although human beings do not know it, these inner soul states are fundamentally different.

It is a strange fact: If parents mourn a child that has died at

an early age, this mourning, has it its actual content and deeper impulse, is only a reflection in the soul of the parents of what the child experiences. The child has remained here and what he feels penetrates into the souls of those who mourn him, calling forth an impulse. It is a pain of compassion; it is in reality the pain or sorrow of the child himself which the parents experience; of course, they ascribe it to themselves, but it is a compassionate grief. Do not misunderstand me, my dear friends; we must take the expression I am going to use in a reasonable sense, without attaching to it any secondary meaning. We might say: If a young person dies we are possessed by the pain from the departed one's soul life (—we are "possessed" in a normal fashion which is not detrimental), he lives on in us, and what expresses itself as pain in his life in us.

It is different when we mourn an older person who has left us. There a pain appears which is not the reflection of what lives in the departed one, for he is really able to receive what lives in our soul; he himself does not lose us. It is impossible for us to be possessed by his pain, by his feelings, for he has no longing to penetrate us with his feelings, for he has no longing to penetrate us with his feelings, because he draws us after him. He does not lose us. Therefore this pain, this mourning is an egotistical path, an egotistical mourning. This is not meant as a reproof, for such pain and mourning are justified; but it is necessary to differentiate between the two

kinds of mourning.

After having thus spoken about mourning our departed ones and the way we continue to live with them, let us now proceed in our considerations to the dead themselves. Since the relation to a person that has died in youth is so different from the relation to a person that departed later in life, you will readily understand that there must be a difference in the way of commemorating them. In regard to a child we shall choose the right ritual, the right commemoration, we shall bear him in our memory in the right way, if we take into consideration that the child has remained with us, that he lives with us and that he loves to become familiar with that which we would have been able to impart to him, had he lived. Experience shows that children after their death long to find in the commemoration which we offer then, general human relationships; they long to find in the funeral service that which is of general interest and has little to do with special interests. Therefore, the Roman-Catholic funeral service is most suitable for children; it is a general ritual, valid for everyone in the same way. A child that has died would like to have a funeral service that is of a general human character, valid for everyone, and not for him alone.

The Protestant funeral service during which a speech is made, entering upon the special, individual life relationships of the departed one is most suitable for the commemoration of

an older person who has died. And if we wish to foster the memory of an older departed person, it is best to cling to details of his life which were characteristic of him and to look in his special, individual life for the thought with which we celebrate his memory.

From this you see, my dear friends, that, properly considered, spiritual science cannot remain mere theory. It shows us something of the relationships which exist in the world from which we are separated merely through the fact that we dream away our feelings and sleep away our will impulses. It speaks of the worlds within which we exist with feeling and will. If we take hold of spiritual-scientific thoughts with sufficient intensity, with proper energy, they will not remain thoughts but will act upon feeling and will. — Just imagine the fruitful effect of these ideas upon life! Clergymen who do not adhere to mere abstract theology will be helped by these ideas in conducting funeral services in the proper way and with the proper tact.

This is not surprising; for the world of which spiritual science speaks is the real world in which our feelings and our will impulses live. Thus, what spiritual science is able to give works, in turn, upon feeling and will. It works upon feeling if we develop our feelings in regard to the dead. But it must also work upon the will impulses. We should pay special attention to this in our time. For, my dear friends, if we were to trace the

will impulses of the human beings of the present day, we would not come upon very deep regions of the human soul. It is imperative today that men look for spiritual impulses for their external life. As I have already said, people still reject this. But they will have to learn it; for this age will become the great task master for the generation that must live through it, the task master to a much greater degree than has been the case so far.

We shall link our next lecture to the concepts I offered to you today, which were concerned with the individual personal element, and shall then speak about the conditions of our present age from a truly spiritual-scientific viewpoint.

Michael's Battle and Its Reflection on Earth 2

IT WILL be my task today to proceed in our spiritual observations from the foundations which we laid here the last time to such spiritual processes which lie immediately behind the events our age that speak so seriously to our souls.

If we live, in the sense of our spiritual science, with the forces that stream from the so-called dead into the realm in which we dwell during our incarnation, it is possible to observe with great vividness what it is spiritually that underlies such a difficult time. To be sure, people of the present age have little longing to know the spiritual background of existence. Such lack of interest is closely connected with the fact that his great catastrophe has befallen mankind in the present age. I have drawn your attention to the fact that in the last third of the nineteenth century, in contrast to earlier periods of time, great changes took place in human evolution. I have repeatedly pointed to the end of the seventies of last century and have shown that the end of the seventies was an incisive moment in the evolution of mankind. Very few people of the present time are aware of the fundamental difference in the spiritual life since the end of the seventies as compared to the spiritual life that preceded it. Human beings lack the perspective to see this; for such a thing only becomes apparent if one is able to observe the differences from a certain distance. If mankind is not to expect still greater misery, this perspective must be gained as soon as possible.

For, my dear friends, our present age is governed by a strange and very vivid contradiction. I shall describe this contradiction to you, and you will find it very grotesque: There is no time within historical human evolution that is so spiritual as the time in which we live, the time since the end of the 70's. From a historical point of view, we live in the most spiritual of times. Still, it is an undeniable fact that people who consider themselves spiritually developed believe that our time is completely materialistic! As far as life is concerned, our time is not materialistic; but as far as the belief of many people and its results are concerned, our time is certainly materialistic. What do we really mean if we say: "ours is a spiritual time"?

Well, my dear friends, consider the natural-scientific world conception of the present day; compared to it, the natural-scientific world conception of the past is materialistic. Today we have a natural-scientific world conception which rises to the most subtle, the most spiritualized concepts. We see this if we observe existence beyond the immediate physical present.

Most spiritual conceptions today, although well-meant, mean very little to the *so-called* dead. But the natural scientific conceptions of the present age, if reflected upon without prejudice, mean extraordinarily much to them. It is an interesting fact that so-called materialistic Darwinism is

conceived of and employed in a completely spiritual fashion in the realm of the dead. In full life things appear quite different from the way they appear in the frequently erroneous belief produced by what people experience in the body. What do I really mean by pointing to the natural-scientific spiritual? Well, in order to be able to form these concepts, to rise to such thoughts as are developed today in regard to evolution, and so forth, a spirituality is needed which did not exist in previous ages. It is much easier to see ghosts and to take them for something spiritual than to form sharply defined concepts for that which seems to be only material. This has brought about the fact that human beings develop in their soul life the most spiritualized concepts, and then proceed to deny them. These spiritualized concepts are mistakenly believed to relate only to material things. The materialistic interpretation of the present natural-scientific world conception is nothing but a denial of its true character. It has sprung from a tendency to cowardice, pure cowardice! One cannot bring oneself to live with one's feelings in these spiritualized concepts and to grasp this spirituality in the rarefaction needed for the forming of clear-cut concepts about nature. One does not dare to acknowledge that one lives in the spirit when one develops these rarefied, spiritualized concepts. One deceives oneself by saying: these concepts relate merely to material things; for this is not true, it is mere self-deception.

The same holds good for other spheres of life. As I pointed

out to you the day before yesterday, {Rudolf Steiner, *Das Sinnlich-Uebersinnliche in seiner Verwirklichung durch die Kunst.* Not yet translated. Anthroposophic Press, New York.} many artistic creations of the present time show values through this spiritualized, refined feeling which did not exist in the art development of earlier epochs. This change in the spiritual life has been brought about through a quite definite spiritual event which I should like to characterize today from a certain point of view.

At the beginning of the forties of the nineteenth century, when the middle of that century had not quite been reached, the Archangel Michael gradually rose from the rank of an Archangel to that of a Time Spirit. He began at that time to undergo an evolution which enabled him to work into human life not merely from the super-earthly standpoint, but directly from the standpoint of the earthly. He had to prepare himself to descend to the earth itself, to emulate, as it were, the great procedure of the Christ Jesus Himself, to take his starting point here upon the earth and to be active henceforth from the point of view of the earth. From the forties to the end of the seventies of the last century this spiritual being prepared himself for this task. Thus is may be observed that the period between the forties and the year 1879 presents a significant battle in that super-earthly sphere which borders immediately on the earthly sphere. {See Rudolf Steiner, *Geistige Wesen und ihre Wirkungen,* Vol. II: *Der Sturz der Geister der*

Finsternis. (Not yet translated) Anthroposophic Press, New York.} This spiritual being whom we call the Archangel Michael had to fight a hard battle against certain opposing spirits. If we wish to understand what actually happened there, we must consider these opposing spirits.

These spiritual beings who had to be fought by the Archangel Michael becoming a time spirit have always affected the life and evolution of mankind; during the past millennia, prior to the middle of the nineteenth century, their task in the spiritual world was to create differentiation among human beings. Those spiritual beings who are the direct followers of the Archangels strive to lead human beings back to the group soul, to spread uniformity over the whole of mankind. If these beings alone had been active, mankind would have become one indistinguishable species, similar to the animal species, but on a somewhat higher level. These spiritual beings, however, against whom the Michaelic principle had to fight had the task of spreading differentiation among mankind, to split humanity into races and peoples; to bring about all those differences that are connected with the blood and with the nerved temperament. This had to happen. They may be called Ahrimanic beings, and we must realize that the Ahrimanic principle was a necessity in the course of mankind's evolution.

Now at time of great significance arrived in the evolution of

mankind, beginning with the forties of the nineteenth century. The time arrived when the old differentiations had to vanish, when the divided human race had to be formed into a unity.

You see, the cosmopolitan views which, to be sure, sometimes turned into cosmopolitan slogans in the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century are simply a reflection of what occurred in the spiritual world. The tendency exists in mankind to wipe out the various differences which were fostered by the blood and the nerve temperament. It is not a tendency of the spiritual worlds to create further differences among mankind, but it is a tendency of the spiritual worlds to pour a cosmopolitan element over mankind. Although, under the impressions of our catastrophic times, people have little understanding for this, still it has to be stated as a true fact. If this fact, mirrored in the earthly events, is observed in it spiritual background, clairvoyant vision shows that it was the spirit who was to become the time spirit of the modern age that from the forties onward fought against the race spirits, the folk spirits that produced the difference between peoples. What has always been represented by a significant symbol took place here, although at a different stage. The symbol refers also to other stages of evolution, for matters repeat themselves at various stages, and what I am telling you now is only a repetition at a certain stage of a spiritual event that took place at other stages. It is the event that is represented by the symbol of the *conquering of the*

dragon by the Archangel Michael. This conquering of the dragon by *the Archangel Michael,* which means that the counter-striving powers have been cast out of the realm in which the Archangel Michael rules, took place in a certain sphere, beginning with the forties of the last century. Certain spiritual beings whose task in the spiritual world it was to divide mankind into races and peoples were cast out of heaven down upon the earth. These spiritual beings who up to the forties produced these differentiations among mankind have no longer any power in the region bordering the earthly world. They have been cast down among men upon the earth with everything they could bring with them.

This is what spiritual science designates as the victory of the Archangel Michael over the counter-striving spirits, which took place at the end of the seventies; the pushing down upon the earth of certain spirits resisting him.

Thus, since the end of the seventies, since 1879, we have two things: we have on earth for those who may be said to be of good will — if we understand the expression in a qualified sense — the rulership of the Time Spirit Michael who enables us to acquire spiritualized concepts, a spiritualized intellectual life. We also have on earth the counter-striving spirits who deceive us into denying the spirituality of the present time. If we fight against the materialism of our time, we should be constantly aware of the fact that we must not fight against

what is good in our age but against the lies of our age. For the spirits that have been pushed out of heaven down upon the earth are chiefly spirits of falsehood who, as spirits of hindrance, prevent us from looking for the spiritual in our grasp of natural existence.

If one learns to know those human beings who descended to earthly incarnation from the spiritual world after the year 1841 and who have died since, one can indeed see how these things are considered from the other side, as it were. One is then in a position to correct much of that which here in the physical world, is very difficult to see through.

You see, at the beginning of the twentieth century it gradually became apparent how necessary it is to point again to the most varied fields of spirit in life; and those who drew attention to this fact were the human beings who, after the year 1848 — more precisely, after 1840 — had participated in the hard battle which was carried on by the Archangel Michael in the spiritual world and which ended in 1879 with the casting down of the counter-striving spirits into the life of the earth, where they now are among human beings. One participates in the battle of the Archangel Michael if one rises against these spirits and tries to drive them from the field. {See: Rudolf Steiner, *Goethestudien und goetheanistische Denkmethoden.* (Not yet translated) Anthroposophic Press, New York.}

Now, there exists a certain law which states that from every point in world history evolution may be traced in two directions: backward as well as forward. If we focus our attention on any point in the historical development of mankind, we may say: At this point of time this or that happened. Now, as time goes on, the events may be observed; but time may also be observed retrospectively. We may go back from 1879 to 1878, 77, 60, 50, and so on, and may then observe the spiritual world in retrospect. The following then presents itself: In the deeper structure of events as they proceed we may discover a repetition of what preceded them. If one expresses something great in a simple way, it may easily sound trivial. But I shall speak simply. If we consider the year 1879, we can proceed to 1880, or we can go back to 1878. If we proceed to 1880, we shall observe in the deeper spiritual structure of that year that what has happened in 1878 is still active within it; behind the events of 1880, there stand, as active forces, the events of 1878, and behind the events of 1881 there stand, as active forces, the events of 1877. As we go back, it is as if the line of time reversed itself, and the events which lie back of a certain point of time placed themselves behind the events which lie ahead of that point of time. Much can be understood if we grasp these things.

Now I beg you to remember that I have for many years spoken about the year 1879, and not only since 1914, which

would be cheap. This is important, my dear friends, and I ask you now to make a simple calculation with me. Count back from the year 1879, count back to the year which I have often designated as the other boundary. I have always stated that the battle of which I am now speaking started at the beginning of the forties, around 1840, 1941, count back: 1879, 1868, 1858, 1848, and 8 or 9 years more; this is 38 or 39 years. Now count forward: 1879, 1889, 1899, 1909, 1914, and right up into our days (1918), and you also have 38 or 39 years. If you observe the year 1917, you will find a surprising result. You will realized the deep significance of the occultist's statement that, in starting from an incisive historical event, you will find the preceding spiritual event repeated in the subsequent one. Behind the earthly events of our days there stand the spiritual events that began in the forties and which we designate as the Archangel Michael's battle against the counter-striving spirits. These events stand behind present-day events. We have a repetition today of what took place at the beginning of the forties. You can imagine how differently one looks at the events of our time if one pays attention to this law. One will develop a deeper understanding of events that now pass unnoticed, that do not penetrate into one's soul. One will realize that the battle of the Archangel Michael against the counter-striving powers has, to a certain degree, returned to its starting point.

It is, in general, very difficult to speak to human beings of

the present day about these deeper relationships, because they violently reject that which would help them to understand the present time and enable them to act in the proper manner. It is necessary today to rid ourselves of old prejudices and consciously to understand the facts.
For things happen here on the physical plane which are of a much more spiritual nature than events in general. This is connected with *the descent of the Archangel Michael* into our earth region. Many people speak of this descent. But if they are seriously called upon to take this fact on its true background, then they do not follow, they do not want to follow. Yet it is extremely necessary that a spiritual understanding of the most important impulses of our age lay hold of ever more extended circles of our contemporaries. Therefore it was very important, during all these years of our group meetings, to draw attention to the necessity of not sleeping away the stream of events which in our time is so strongly influenced by the spirit. For to sleep away events is a characteristic trait of our time. People pass by the events as though asleep, and it can be said that the more incisive, the more significant an event is that enters the physical plane, the more human beings sleep through it.

The events of March, 1917 — if I may indicate a concrete fact {Outbreak of the Russian Revolution. Abdication of the Czar. (Editor)} — were of tremendous significance and will produce results of such great importance of which mankind

does not even dream today; and it is really unbelievable how little understanding exists among people for the necessity of a complete revision of their judgments, of a complete revision of all that people have believed prior to 1914.

On this occasion, I may perhaps be permitted to point to the fact that in 1910 I delivered a number of lectures in Kristiania (Oslo) about the European folk souls. In the first of these lectures you may read that human beings will soon be called upon to understand something about the relations of the European folk souls. {Rudolf Steiner, the *Mission of Folk Souls in Connection with Germanic-Scandinavian Mythology*. Anthroposophic Press, New York.} The following has been repeatedly emphasized in our lectures: turn your gaze toward the immediate East; what happens there is important for human evolution. How often has this been said! Every one of my listeners has heard it. And in the spring of 1914, in my Vienna lecture cycle about the life between death and a new birth, {Rudolf Steiner, *The Inner Being of Man and Life Between Death and a New Birth.* Anthroposophic Press, New York.} I dared to make the emphatic statement that the social life of our time may be compared with a special form of disease, namely, with a carcinoma; I stated that a creeping cancerous disease permeates social life. Naturally, my dear friends, under our present conditions these things cannot be stated in another form; but they must be understood.

We must not think of world events following one another in continuous progression, as historians imagine. They believe that the later event develops out of the preceding one, which has in turn developed out of the one preceding it, and so forth. The prejudice which maintains that the later must develop in the most tranquil fashion out of what preceded it we may leave to those who do not have the sense for reality which is expected of the anthroposophist. We may leave this prejudice to the politicians. Reality, however, is quite different. We must think of the course of events as of a pair of scales in full motion, the scale-beam descending first on the right side, and then on the left. Therefore, the time since the beginning of the forties may be characterized as follows: Great possibilities existed if only the attempt had been made during the period from 1840 to 1914 — the year 1879 divides this period into two parts — to prepare in an adequate manner the spiritualization of mankind which is striven for by the Archangel Michael; if the attempt had been made on a larger scale to imbue mankind with spiritual concepts, spiritual ideas. Mankind, however, must depend in our age on its own free will; and if, out of its own free volition, mankind fails to grasp such possibilities, then the scale-beam sinks to the other side. What could have been reached on the spiritual path is now discharged through the blood. What we experience in our catastrophic times is an equalization of the scales. Mankind who has rejected spiritualization must be *forced* to accept it. This can happen through a physical catastrophe.

This idea may be verified if we place ourselves upon the following firm foundation: We *live* here in this physical world; but we are *awake* in this physical world only through our perceptions and our concepts, as I described the day before yesterday. We dream with our feelings and sleep with our will impulses. This is a matter of course for man. But if we familiarize ourselves, through imagination, inspiration and intuition with the spiritual world which is always around us like the air, and in which the so-called dead exist, together with us, in which their impulses are active, then we perceive how life, here in the physical world, is connected with the life of the so-called dead. The dead are able to receive from human hearts only spiritual thoughts.

Recall what I told you the day before yesterday. I said: If a human being dies in his youth, he has, in a spiritual sense, not actually left his family; he has, in reality, remained here. Something of great importance to the dead is connected with this and I beg you to take this very seriously. For the departed one it is not merely a question of *being here*. For him it is a question of being able to bear this existence. If the dead person is present in a materialistically inclined family which does not cultivate spiritual thoughts, he is constantly oppressed and distressed; the family constitutes a nightmare for him, comparable to the nightmare we experience when we inhale too great an amount of air. Only spiritual thoughts among those with whom he has remained can rid him of this

nightmare and make life among them bearable for the departed one.

And again, I told you: If an older person is torn from his family, he takes their souls with him, in a certain respect. He draws them after him; but if they are not permeated by spiritual thoughts, they likewise constitute a nightmare for him.

Now let us consider the following: We can learn a great deal if we observe the sudden death of a human being caused by outer or abnormal inner conditions. Let us say, a human being is slain or shot. In such an instance, death is brought about in a way which is very different from gradual death through illness. Imagine the following case: A human being is shot in his thirty-fifth year; his life is destroyed through outer circumstances. If the bullet had not struck him (certainly, there are karmic connections, but what I am going to say nevertheless holds good) this human being's constitution might have enabled him to live another thirty-five years. He bears within him the constitution for another thirty-five years. This, now, produces a quite definite effect.

My dear friends, if a human being dies by violence with his life forces are still very active, he has tremendously significant experiences at the moment of death. Condensed into one moment, he experiences things which would have been spread over long periods of time. What he could have

experienced during the next thirty-five years he now experiences in a single moment. For the important experience in the hour of death is the following: the human being sees in truth his body from outside; he sees the transition it passes through; he sees that it relinquishes the control of the forces it possessed when the soul dwelt in the body, and that it now becomes a nature-being, given over to the nature forces, to the external physical forces. The tremendously significant experience at the moment of death is that the human being then beholds the relinquishing of his organism to the physical nature forces. If a human being suffers a violent death, he is suddenly delivered not only to the normal nature forces, but his organism is treated by the bullet shot as if it were an inorganic, lifeless body; it is completely relegated to the inorganic world. There is a great difference between a slow death through illness and a sudden death through the interference of the external world with the human organism, be it in the form of a bullet or in any other form. In this moment there is a sudden flaring up, a sudden flashing forth of a tremendous amount of spirituality. The flaming up of a spiritual aura takes place, and the one who has passed through the portal of death looks back upon this flaming up. This flaming up greatly resembles the event that takes place only when the human beings devote themselves to spiritual concepts. These are values, my dear friends, which are interchangeable. It is extremely interesting to see the following similarity: the departed one perceives from the other

side the sentient thought which arises in a person when he enjoys or creates an image, a painting, that is born out of spiritual life; the departed one then sees how similar this sentient thought, seen from the beyond, is to the sensation a person has (who is of course unconscious of this) when he suffers an external injury, let us say, to his arm and pain arises from it. There is a great relationship between the two events; one may take the place of the other.

Now you will grasp the karmic connection between the two events. Naturally, quite a number of people knew the “aspect of the stars” when the forties of last century approached. If occultists wish to designate such an event as the battle of the Archangel Michael with the dragon, they do so by using the technical expression: “this is the aspect of the stars.” There existed at that time quite a number of people who knew that such a significant event was taking place. There were some who wanted to take precaution, but one of the scales of the balance was too heavily weighted: the materialistic inclination was too strong. Thus the worse measures possible were restored to. People who understand the signs of the times were fully aware of the fact that spiritual life *must* enter mankind. If this spiritual life had entered mankind from the beginning of the forties onward, mankind would have been spared many catastrophes. For what took place *would* have taken place, but in another form. What is karmically necessary happens; but it may occur in various forms. This must always

be kept in mind.

I shall express myself more explicitly. There are two ways of thinking about what ought to happen in the social sphere or any other field. We may present a program, may form programmatical concepts; we can think out how the world should develop in a certain field; this can be presented in beautiful words. We can swear by these words, take them as dogmas, but nothing will result from them, nothing at all! We might have the most beautiful ideas about what ought to happen, but nothing will come of them. Ideas, however beautiful, need not result in anything. Thought-out programs are the most worthless things in life. In contrast to this, we can do something else, and many a person does it without any special clairvoyance. We may, simply through a naive, intuitive knowledge of the condition of the times, ask ourselves: What is bound to happen in the next twenty or thirty years? What is it that in our time wishes to become reality? Then, if one has discovered what will inevitably happen, one can say to oneself: Now we can choose; people can either come to their senses and guide the course of events in the direction it must take in any case: then matters will turn out well. Or they can fail to do this by being asleep and simply allowing matters to run their course: in which case that which must take place will be brought about by catastrophes, revolutions, and cataclysms. No statistics, no programs, however well thought out, are of any value. Only

the observation of what wills to appear out of the hidden depths of the times is of value. This must be taken up into our consciousness; by this the intentions of the present must be governed.

In the forties of the last century the many people who adhered to programs have *won the victory* over the few who understood what I have just stated. From this sprang all kinds of attempts to spiritualize mankind: spiritism (spiritualism,), for instance, is one of them; it is an attempt to spiritualize and reform mankind with inadequate means; to reveal the spiritual worlds materialistically. Even our thinking may be materialistic. It is a materialistic thought that says: This or that particular group of mankind is in the right. Why do the spiritual powers not intervene and help them vindicate their rights? — How often do we hear people say today: Why do the spiritual powers not intervene? The day before yesterday I gave an answer to this in a more abstract form: Mankind today must rely on its own freedom. Those who ask: why do the spiritual powers not intervene? proceed from the assumption that ghosts instead of men should make politics. That would certainly be easy progress if ghosts instead of human beings were to introduce the necessary reforms. This, of course, they do not do, because human beings must rely on their freedom. The expectation of help from ghosts is what most decidedly confounds human beings; it draws their attention away from what ought to happen. Thus the period in the life of mankind

in which refined spiritual concepts were gradually developed was precisely the time when mankind was exposed to the strongest materialistic temptations. Human beings simply are unable to distinguish between refined spiritualized concepts and sensations on the one hand and that which, on the other hand, approaches them as temptation and counter-acts the grasping of the spiritualized element within them. Therefore, because people did not comprehend at the right time how evolution must proceed, our catastrophic age, our present difficult times have become a necessity. Without the present hard experiences mankind would have sunk still deeper into doubt of itself. To be sure, it would have developed spirituality, but it would have *rejected* it to a still greater degree.

This is part of the background of historical development. I should like very much, indeed, to throw light from this background upon much that lies in the foreground; but you will appreciate the reasons why this cannot be done in our present age. I must leave it to the individual to illuminate for himself what lives in our immediate present, seen from the background I have just described.

You see, my dear friends, the sleeping away of events which I have characterized causes an inward overlooking of the sharp angles and contours of life. But if we overlook the sharp angles and contours of life, compromises arise. Now,

there may be times which are suitable for compromises. The time that preceded the forties of the nineteenth century was one; but this is not true of our time. Our time demands that we see things as they are, with all their angles and contours, in sharp relief; but it also arouses in the human soul the urge — just because of the presence of these sharp angles and contours — to close its eyes sleepily to them. What I have just stated may be observed even in regard to the greatest, the most significant events in human evolution.

In regard to the greatest event in world history, human evolution has brought about just these angles and contours! Indeed, even in regard to the greatest event of world history, namely, the Mystery of Golgotha. We know all the observations made in the course of the theological development of the nineteenth century concerning the Mystery of Golgotha. From the time Lessing began to speak about the Mystery of Golgotha right up to the time of the theologian Drews, all kinds of statements have been made regarding it. And it may well be said that the whole theological development of the nineteenth century offers complete proof of the fact that people have entirely forgotten how to understand the mystery of Golgotha. But there are some very interesting publications concerning the Christ Jesus. Very interesting publications, indeed! Take for instance, a Danish one {Emil Rasmussen *Jesus, A Comparative Psychopathological Study*.} This Danish publication is written

entirely from the standpoint of the modern natural-scientific thinker. The author states: I am a psychologist, a physiologist, and a psychiatrist; I observe the Gospels from this standpoint. And at what conclusion does he arrive? Quite factually, in the sense of modern psychiatric judgment, he arrives at the following one: The picture which the Gospels sketch of the Christ Jesus is a pathological one. We can only conceive of the Christ Jesus as a person suffering from insanity, epilepsy, morbid visions, and similar conditions; he possesses all the symptoms of a serious mental illness. — If one reads the most important passage of this book to people, as I have recently done, {See: Rudolf Steiner, *Geistige Wesen und ihre Wirkungen (Spiritual Beings and Their Effects*), Vol. IV, first lecture (not yet translated) Anthroposophic Press, New York.} they are shocked. This is comprehensible; for, if what they consider sacred is described as a pathological case, people are horrified. But what are the real facts in the matter? My dear friends, the facts are as follows; Among the great number of dishonest compromisers one arose who takes his stand completely upon the natural-scientific viewpoint; he makes no compromises whatsoever but states: I am a scientist: therefore I must speak as I do; for these are the facts. — If people would place themselves honestly upon the standpoint of natural science, they would have to hold such views. There are these sharp angles and contours from which they cannot escape. They cannot escape unless they forsake the natural-scientific standpoint and go over to the spiritual-

scientific standpoint: in this case they will remain honest, — or they may choose to remain honest upon the natural-scientific standpoint; then they are obliged to observe matters, without compromising, in the way of such a scientist who, although entirely honest in his field, is thoroughly limited in his views and does not try to conceal his limitations. He is thoroughly limited, but consistent. This has to be understood. If people would see today what must of necessity result if certain things are consistently carried through, they would see life without compromise.

Someone recently handed me an interesting slip of paper mentioning a book that is already known to me, but since I do not have it with me here, I can only read you what is written on this slip of paper. It was handed to me in order to show me what things are possible today.

“Anyone who has attended high school will remember the unforgettable hours when he had to ‘enjoy’ in his studies of Plato the conversations of Socrates with his friends. Unforgettable because of the fabulous boredom which was engendered by these conversations. He will perhaps remember that these conversations of Socrates struck him as extremely stupid; but, of course, he did not dare utter this opinion, for after all, the man in question was Socrates, ‘the greatest philosopher.’ Alexander Moszkowski’s book, *Socrates the Idiot*, (published by Heysler & Co., Berlin)

completely does away with the unjustified overestimation of the good Athenian. In this small, entertainingly written book, the historian Moszkowski undertakes to divest Socrates thoroughly of his philosophical honors. The title, *Socrates the Idiot*, is to be taken literally. We shall not go wrong in assuming that this book will call forth scientific discussions."

Now, you will think it dreadful that such things are written. But I do not find it dreadful at all. I think it is self-evident and quite honest of Moszkowski; for, according to his concepts and sentiments, he cannot do otherwise, if he wishes to remain consistent, than to call Socrates an idiot. In doing so he is more honest than many others who, in keeping with their views, should call Socrates an idiot, too, but who prefer to make compromises instead.

I do not need to say, my dear friends, that you should not go out now and spread the news that I am in agreement with Moszikowski when he declares Socrates to have been an idiot. I hope that you understand what I really mean.

But I must acknowledge the fact that people arrive at certain judgments in our time because they make dishonest compromises. It is impossible to think about soul-pathology as modern psychiatrist do and not write a book such as that by the Danish author concerning the Christ Jesus. It cannot be done. One is dishonest if one does not either reject these

concepts and replace them by spiritual concepts, or take the standpoint that the Christ Jesus was a mental case. — If one is acquainted with the views of such people, if one knows Moszkowski's opinion concerning the whole structure of the universe, his peculiar views about the theory of radiation and the theory of the quantum, one can appreciate why he, if he wishes to remain honest and consistent, must consider Socrates an also Plato idiots.

What is especially necessary for mankind is the rejection of compromises. Human beings should not make compromises, at least not within their souls. It is very important to consider this as a demand of our age, for it belongs among the most significant impulses of the Time Spirit, Michael, to pour clarity, absolute clarity into human souls. If one wishes to follow the Archangel Michael, it is necessary to pour clarity into human souls, to overcome sleepiness. This sleepiness arises in other spheres also, but above all it is an absolute necessity today to gain insight into the consequences of things. In previous ages this was different. During the centuries prior to the Michael age, in which European mankind was governed by the Archangel Gabriel, the compromises which human beings made in their thinking were lessened by the influence of the spiritual world. Michael is the spirit who works, in the most eminent sense, with the *freedom* of man. Michael will always do what is necessary. You must not believe that Michael fails to do the right thing. In the unconscious regions of the soul of

every human being there is today, sharply outlined, every contour and angle of the spiritual life. It is there. Anyone who is at all capable of bringing to the surface what exists in the depths of the soul life as latent visions knows what it is that lives today in the souls as discrepancies and unrelated facts. He knows that in the souls there live side by side the modern materialistic psychiatry which does not shrink from seeing an epileptic in the Christ Jesus, and even the acknowledgment of the Christ Jesus. Anyone who is at all capable of raising these things into consciousness becomes aware of these facts. It would be interesting if a good painter, with a real understanding of our present time, would paint “Christ, seen from the point of view of a modern psychiatrist,” depicting it expressionistically. The result would be very interesting if the painter had a real understanding of what takes place at the present time in the depths of human soul life.

You see, in our time we have to plumb the depths if we wish to grasp what takes place at the surface of existence. But one can understand, on the other hand, that people are seized by a certain cowardice and discouragement if they are to approach the indicated matter.

This is the other quality necessary today: courage, even a certain audacity, in perceiving, in thinking; an audacity that does not dull our concepts but makes them highly acute. Everything that has to be said today may be found in outer

events; the spiritual researcher simply describes it more precisely because he sees it against its proper background. And if the spiritual researcher then describes this background, the outer events will corroborate all the more what has, for example, been indicated today.

Many people ask: “What shall I do?” It is so obvious what one should do! One should open one’s eyes! One’s spiritual eyes, to be sure. If one opens one’s eyes, the Will will follow. The Will depends upon our life situation. It is not always possible in one’s particular circumstances, according to one’s karma, to do the right thing; but one must try to open one’s eyes spiritually. Today, however, the following often happens: If one tries to impart to people in words what is necessary for the present age, they quickly close their eyes, they swiftly turn their minds away form it. This is the descending of the scales on the other side. — What I am saying here might be considered a criticism of our age, but this is not my intention. My purpose is to draw attention to the impulses that must enter human souls, human minds out of the spiritual world, if we wish to get beyond the catastrophic times in which we live. As I have stated, it is not possible to enter into concrete details. Each of you can do that for himself.

The Weaving and Living Activity of the Human Etheric Bodies

For a gradual acquisition of that science which we designate as spiritual science, it is necessary that we should have the good will of filling out the thoughts and thought-connections which are indicated almost in the form of a plan with real ideas relating to those things which can at first only be given in a more general outline. We say that the human being consists of physical body, etheric body, astral body, Ego, etc. This is quite correct, to begin with, for it is necessary that we should orient ourselves with the aid of encompassing schematic ideas. But if we wish to continue in the acquisition of spiritual science, we must penetrate more accurately into everything which has thus been given in a schematic form. We already possess quite a considerable number of lecture-cycles, which are read particularly within the more restricted circle connected with our Society; but these cycles of lectures still contain relatively little of what should be known to humanity in a near future, at least to a certain number of people! This would be most desirable. To begin with, we say: We designate as man's physical body his external appearance, which can be perceived through the physical senses and which can be observed with the aid of that science that is linked up with the intellect, with experiments and observations. We know that the etheric body lies at the foundation of the physical body. Let us, first of all, cast our spiritual eye upon these two members of human nature.

Spiritual science as such, needs to say least of all (of course, this is at first only apparently the case) about the physical body, for the physical body is the only thing which the ordinary science, dealing with the physical world, is willing to contemplate with the aid of its methods. But although the physical body may at first seem to be what natural science considers, it to be, its true significance and its position within the universe can only be recognised if the higher members of the human organisation are also borne in mind.

You will undoubtedly recollect that man's physical body, in the form in which it envelops him here upon the. earth, could only arise during the Earth-epoch, but it received its first foundation during the ancient Saturn-epoch. During the Sun, Moon and Earth epochs, it then underwent a constant transformation. It was gradually transformed under the influence of the processes which were taking place: it was transformed through the fact that the etheric body was incorporated with it. When the physical body passed on from the Saturn epoch to a new epoch, it had to change, for it became permeated with the etheric body. And it also had to change when it became permeated with the astral body upon the Moon. Not only has the astral body been added to the physical body, but the physical body has been transformed through the fact that the etheric body penetrated into it, as it were, during the Sun-epoch and the astral body during the. Moon-epoch, whereas the Ego is gradually developing in

every direction here, upon the Earth; of course, it develops first of all within the astral body, then within the etheric body, but then also within the physical body.

If we now pass on from the human being to the cosmos, we only need to remember what is contained in our lecture-cycles. We must remember, in this case, that just as the first foundation of the physical body has been made possible through the outpouring, as we may call it, of the Spirits of the Will or the Thrones, so the transformation during the Sun-epoch became possible through the Spirits of Wisdom, and the transformation during, the Moon-epoch through the Spirits of Movement. The transformation during the Earth-epoch, that is to say, the change entailed through the fact that an Ego now dwells within the physical body, has been made possible through the Spirits of Form, This is a most significant fact, which we must bear in mind. When we encounter man's physical body upon the Earth, we must think of it as being endowed with an Ego, and since it is endowed with an Ego, we must bear in mind that it has received a certain form, the form which is most appropriate to it. During the Moon epoch, it has merely received the inner movement which was most adapted to it. The form which was most suited to it, is a gift of the Spirits of Form, and is in keeping with the fact that an Ego had to be Implanted in it.

We may thus say: Our earthly body, which has a physical

form, has been formed in such a way as to become a bearer of the Ego. Together with the Ego, the Spirits of Form gave the human physical body the form which it now has and which is in keeping with the fact that it is the bearer of an Ego. The beings that belong to the other kingdoms of Nature, have received their forms later. If you read the more intimate descriptions of the Moon-epoch, [See *The Akasha Chronicles* by Rudolf Steiner.] you will find that they describe all the other beings in such a manner that it is not possible to say that also these beings had their forms at that time. They are described with a certain mobility. Bear in mind, for instance, the description contained in my *Occult Science*.

Also the other kingdoms of Nature have received their stable forms through the Spirits of Form, during the Earth-epoch. Let us now contemplate the animal kingdom. Also the animal kingdom has its definite forms. It has acquired these forms only during the Earth. epoch. But think of the great difference between the forms of the animal kingdom and of the kingdom of man! If we cast our gaze over the surface of the earth, we may indeed find certain differences among men, but these differences belong to another field of study. We also come across certain differences in the external human form. All the interesting peoples which the West Europeans now lead into the field against Central Europe of course present a different aspect from the European populations! Differences can of course be perceived when we cast our gaze over the

surface of the earth and study the form of various individual human beings. The colour of the skin must, for instance, be considered in connection with the bodily form. But if you compare the differentiations which exist in regard to the human being with the great differentiations which exist in regard to the various animal species, you will have to admit: The various species of animals differ far more from one another than the human beings. In comparison to the various animal species we can speak of an individual human species; in the human kingdom, however, we cannot find such a great difference as may be found, for instance, between a lion and a nightingale. If there would be such a great difference in the kingdom of man as that between a lion and a nightingale, we would not hear even such peculiar observations that it is not possible to notice the differences which exist among human beings. The fact to be borne in mind is that the animals show infinitely greater differences than the human being, within his own general human species.

Although the things which I have just now explained to you are undoubtedly right, they are only right within certain limits, if we consider them from the aspect of spiritual science. The following fact should be looked upon as a truth: In your thoughts and, in your observation, add the etheric body to man’s physical body and imagine that a certain experiment is to be made; in reality, of course, this experiment cannot be made. Imagine the following experiment and that you see it

being enacted; imagine that the whole physical body of man can be separated from him, detached from him scientifically, piece by piece and that before we begin to detach the physical body from the human being we are in the position to invoke the Spirits of the higher hierarchies — to send an invocation to the Spirits of the Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai. We would have to utter this invocation in such a way that its request would be granted, namely, that the Spirits of the Angeloi, Archangeloi, and Archai might withdraw from the human being and cease; to influence his etheric body. We would, therefore — we cannot say, excoriate — but we would have to take away from the human being everything pertaining to his physical body and then we would have to ask the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai to withdraw their influences, so that man's etheric body may be left entirely to its own resources, and may no longer be influenced by anything else. For the etheric body is subjected to certain influences; it is inserted in the physical body and the physical body has its own solid form, to which the etheric body must adapt itself. If you take a very soft piece of rubber and put it into a glass, it will adapt itself to the form of the glass and will no longer maintain its own form. But if you take it out of the glass, it will bound back into its own form. In a similar way, the etheric body must adapt itself to the physical body, without a form of its own. Consequently, if we draw away the physical body, we eliminate the forces to which the etheric body had to adapt itself; however, it would not immediately take on its own

form, owing to the fact that the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai still work upon it, but we have asked them to withdraw, so that the etheric body can now obey its own forces to the fullest extent. In that case, the etheric body would take on its own elasticity. And this would be visible; we would see the etheric body jumping out. And what would occur? — You would have before you the whole animal kingdom! The etheric body would split up into portions, and these would show in their fundamental types the forms of the whole animal kingdom. In other words: etherically, the human being carries about within him the whole animal kingdom, which is simply held together by the form of his physical body and by the activity of the Beings of the above-named hierarchies. It is unquestionably true that the human being bears within him, as a disposition, the whole animal kingdom. From this standpoint, the animal kingdom differs from man only through the fact that every animal-species has assumed a form of its own, which it has developed independently into a physical shape. Consequently, the animal kingdom is the expanded etheric body of man,

A strange fact should be borne in mind. At the turn of the 18th and of the 19th century, something special arose within the world-conception of Europe, and we may observe this, for instance, more in detail in the case of Oken. From the standpoint of his time, the scientist Oken could not as yet speak of etheric bodies; indeed, he was far from doing so. But

in his books we may find the following peculiar statement: “The animal kingdom is the human being, expanded.” This means that in his fantasy he had caught, a glimpse of the truth. It rose up on his spiritual horizon at a time when the great ideas of the Central European world-conception had developed. Indeed, this truth even rose up on Schelling’s horizon, and this same statement can also be found in Schelling’s books. Those who were unable to penetrate into such a lofty idea, which could not, of course, be developed fully, those who were unable to penetrate into such a great idea, went through a terrible time. We should think of Oken in such a way, that the things which he could not as yet grasp clearly, nevertheless lived within his soul as a marvellous conception, so that he could feel the single parts of the human being really consist of animal forms. He even had the courage to express this, but this courage very much annoyed the learned Philistines. Just think that Oken conceived the following idea: What is the tongue? — Well, he said that the tongue is a cuttlefish. Of course, the things which I have just explained to you lay at the foundation of this statement … but just imagine what the learned Philistines thought about it! If we wish to grasp the development of man’s spiritual life we must become broad-minded and we must realise that things which may apparently sound like nonsense may bear within them a great truth. Oken subdivided the human being as follows: The tongue is a cuttlefish, other organs are something else. After all, it was merely the exact repetition of a truth

which existed in a very ancient conception of man and which brought into evidence the fundamental types, subdividing the human being in accordance with the four fundamental animal types: Lion, eagle, angel and calf.

Thus we may say: Things are not as easy as they appear to be, for in reality, the human being bears within his etheric body the whole animal kingdom. As a philosopher might express himself, he bears it within him as a disposition.

Now you should bear in mind the following fact: If the things which I have just now described to you would not take place, if in addition to the fact that the physical body holds together the whole animal kingdom, the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai would not exercise their influence, then the process explained above would necessarily take place, when the human being lays aside the physical body and passes through the portal of death; namely, the etheric body would, in that case, jump out elastically into the world when the astral body and the Ego have abandoned it, and a whole etheric animal kingdom would rise out of the etheric body. But in reality, this does not take place; this animal kingdom does not rise out of the human being, for the etheric body detaches itself in an entirely different form; it detaches itself and becomes incorporated with the universal ether and interweaves with it. [Compare: “Inner Being of Man and Life Between Death and a New Birth”.]

What lies before us in that case? The fact that the Beings of the hierarchies of the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai work upon our etheric body and do not allow it to reach the point of splitting up into the animal kingdom. What does really take place? — You see, I would like to describe these things by drawing in a comparison. Here upon the earth we human beings work. We build machines, for instance, machines made of wood or of iron. Wood and iron are our fundamental materials. We use them to construct machines. The way in which these materials are put together is our own work, but wood and even iron are raw materials which we take from the earth. We take them from a kingdom which lies below our human kingdom.

If you now imagine that the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai live above us, you will also realise that these Beings do not exist in the universe simply in order to have a perpetual holiday. They have their work, tasks which they must fulfil. What do they really do? They, too, must use a material for their work, just as we use wood and iron which we take from the earth, and they, too, will work upon this material. Our etheric bodies are the material used by the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai. For the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai, our etheric bodies have the same value that the wood and iron which we take from the earth have for us, when we use them to build machines. The Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai work upon our etheric bodies, and when we walk about

upon the earth and harbour, as it were, the thought (if we have such thought at all!) that we carry about within us our etheric body, believing that we carry it about as something that belongs to us in the same way in which the lungs that we carry about within us belong to us — then the whole essence of the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai is active around us and works out forms for the spiritual world, forms that are needed there, just as machines are needed here upon the earth. They work out what is needed in the spiritual world. What aids these spiritual beings in their work?

You see, throughout our life we think; we think, from the moment that we attain the capacity of thinking up to the moment of death. Our thinking consists therein that it weaves and lives in our etheric body. Yet, while we live within our physical body, we believe that only the things we mould in the shape of thoughts belong to us. But what we thus possess in the shape of thoughts, what we thus form and mould within our thoughts is, as it were, only the inner aspect of our whole thought-life. From outside, the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai work upon our thoughts, particularly in regard to our etheric body. As human beings, it is not at all unnecessary that we should think. Our thoughts are necessary not only for the physical earth, but also for the cosmos. For what we transform within our etheric body through our thinking, is employed during our earthly life as a material which is used in accordance with higher standpoints. While we pass through

the world as thinking human beings, the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai work upon our thoughts, so that after our death something may arise that can be incorporated with the whole ether of the universe. When our astral body and our Ego lay aside our etheric body, they sew into the cosmos the wool of our etheric body, that has arisen essentially through our manner of thinking.

As human beings, we do not only live for ourselves; we also live for the whole universe. We know that Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan will follow our Earth. But all this must be prepared; it must be interwoven with the universe as forces. This entails work. It forms part of this work, for instance, that the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai carry it on in accordance with our thoughts. (Stupid thoughts are not the same kind of material as clever thoughts). Coarsely speaking, the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai work upon these etheric machines in accordance with the material that we supply to them, and these “machines” then exist, in order that the evolution of the universe may continue. When our etheric body is handed over to the cosmos after our death, this kind of work is therefore handed over at the same time to the Beings of the three, above-mentioned hierarchies.

Let us now contemplate from a similar standpoint man’s astral body. We always contemplate things from different standpoints, so that we always obtain other connections with

the surrounding kingdoms, and those who cannot read (an encompassing view of things is needed in order to be able to read) may discover many contradictions in our descriptions, but this is only due to the fact that they ignore the standpoints from which these things are viewed.

You see, our astral body is connected with the earthly surroundings in a similar way as our etheric body. From the standpoint just indicated, our etheric body is the whole ANIMAL KINGDOM. Our astral body is, instead, the whole VEGETABLE KINGDOM. In exactly the same way in which I spoke to you of the etheric body in connection with the animal kingdom, I would now have to speak to you of the astral body in connection with the vegetable kingdom. All the vegetable forms of our earth are contained in the astral body. And again, we find that if nothing else were to occur, if the Beings of the higher Hierarchies would not work upon our astral body, if during the time between death and a new birth, when we live backwards through our life, nothing would occur except the fact that the astral body is discarded, then the astral body would appear as the whole vegetable kingdom outside in the world. Indeed, this would even take on the form of a sphere, it would follow its own elasticity. The astral body would really take on the form of a sphere; but it cannot do this because during our life between birth and death the Spirits of Form have been working upon our astral body, also the Spirits of Movement, the Spirits of Wisdom, and even the Spirits of the

Will. When after years or decades we have lived backwards through our earthly life and have thus gradually freed the astral body from its connection with earthly existence, then the astral body will contain the results of a work, results that the Spirits of Form, the Spirits of Movement, the Spirits of Wisdom and the Spirits of the Will require in order to incorporate something with the cosmos, namely, to incorporate with it, what they MUST incorporate with it. Of course, what thus becomes incorporated with the cosmos is to our own profit; for this must be contained in the cosmos. However, this becomes inwoven with the cosmos in a manner that differs from the process described above.

When we discard our etheric body, this becomes inwoven, I might say, with the universal ether of the cosmos. But what appears now, as a woof woven out of our astral body as a result of the work of the Spirits of Form, the Spirits of Movement, the Spirits of Wisdom and of the Thrones, cooperates with our Ego that is passing through its time between death and a new birth and contains forces which must be active, in order that we may once more enter a new incarnation. Many things are needed in order that we may enter a new incarnation! Many things, indeed! To-day, the ordinary science of the physical world really knows quite a lot about the structure of the skull and of the human brain; such a lot, that many people find it is too much to learn all these things! It is undoubtedly a lot. But suppose that all the

knowledge which is acquired through external science were to be considered from a particular standpoint … from the standpoint that the _skull containing that wonderful structure of the brain has actually arisen, that it could really be formed in its minutest details, whereas if all this had to be formed with the aid of our ordinary external science, very little indeed could be achieved!

Here we face a significant mystery, a mystery that obtuse men (the sort of men whom we can really designate as obtuse) think to cope with so easily by saying: “Well, the human being simply arises! In the course of the generations, it so happened that human bodies develop spontaneously within the bodies of mothers. This is quite spontaneous.” Indeed, the arguments adopted by such people can be grasped … but let me show you, with the aid of a comparison, how clever they really are!

For instance, you may take for granted that here in Munich there are certain Beings able to perceive many things, but unable to perceive man, and thus unable to see his activities. It is quite possible, to imagine this! But those Beings who cannot see man, nor his activities, may, for instance, be able to see — a clock. They would, therefore, know that there are clocks and also how they are made. They would not, however, see the man who makes the clock; they would only see how a clock arises from its single parts. They would

perhaps see the different kinds of pincers taking hold of the clock's parts, but they would see them gripping, as it were, out of the air. What a conception would these Beings have of a clock? They would not say: "In Munich there are clock-makers", but they would say: "Clock-makers do not exist; the clocks arise spontaneously, of their own accord, for we can see how they form themselves." This is the manner of thinking adopted by people who take for granted that things that gradually develop in a physical way must arise quite spontaneously! However, everything that arises is the result of actions fulfilled by spiritual Beings belonging to the higher Hierarchies. Indeed, the human being does not arise spontaneously, merely through the interchanging influence of father and mother and through what develops within the mother's body, but the whole cosmos participates in his development.

Particularly the external world, as far as its highest regions, cooperates in the formation of the human head. It participates less in what is attached to the head, and participates in a particular way in the development of the human head. In a not too distant future, even ordinary science will learn to think differently in embryology concerning all the organs and also concerning the human head. It will discover that the other organs depend very strongly upon hereditary qualities, whereas the formation of the head depends upon them only very slightly. The form of the head is simply pushed together

after the formation of the other organs. The whole cosmos participates in the forming of the head and the influences of the cosmos penetrate into the mother's body. Those who do not see these forces … well, also a farmer does not see the forces that are active in a magnet, but this does not prove the non-existence of these forces. What exists in the human head, has been worked out, as it were, in connection with all that the human being has received from the Spirits of Form, the Spirits of Movement and the Thrones, with what he bears along within his Ego, carrying it over into the time between death and a new birth, as a mighty spherical form. What is thus elaborated is gigantic; it is a sphere and within this sphere everything is worked out. [See Rudolf Steiner's *Macrocosm and Microcosm*.]

Imagine a gigantic sphere, upon whose surface is engraved, as upon a globe, everything that must be worked into it in accordance with what the human being handed over, to begin with, to the universal cosmos through his etheric body, through the extract of his etheric body; this forms, as it were, something that is copied on to the surface of the sphere. We then work into it what should be engraved upon it in accordance with what we have brought along with us through the work done upon our astral body. And then comes the time — it begins with that moment designated by me as the world's midnight hour — when the sphere gradually grows smaller and finally this sphere, upon which, the higher Spirits

work, becomes quite small, it grows smaller and smaller, until it unites with the human germ conceived within the mother's body. This, above all, gives rise to the form of the head. The gradual development of the form of the head is the result of centuries of work on the part of the higher Hierarchies.

Just imagine how man's feelings in regard to his relationship with the world could be deepened if he would be aware of his position within the whole cosmic connections! The human being who carries his head upon his shoulders should learn to think in all humility, without any pride and arrogance, that human wisdom and all that may be found in it, contains very little indeed of what is required for the forming of the head bestowed upon the human being! Man bears within him everything that is contained in the cosmos. If we consider things from this standpoint, spiritual science acquires an immense value through, the fact that it becomes the point of departure for certain feelings, that may, indeed, endanger souls filled with pride and arrogance.

In my second Mystery Play I have alluded to this fact, in the scene where Capesius, conversing with Benedictus, feels the approach of truths telling him that the deeds of gods are needed in order to give rise to man. Truths of this kind may increase the vanity of many, who may at first be disposed to vanity. They may attribute enormous importance to themselves. Yet it would be far more reasonable to foster the

feeling showing us how little of all that wisdom which gave rise to the human being really exists within our own consciousness! Of course, we may snare the opinion of those who say: “Of what use is it to know all these things? We can quite well do without this knowledge. Indeed, we can live quite comfortably without knowing, all these, things” … Yet a great error is contained in the belief that we can quite well do without this knowledge! For, in reality, we cannot live without it. Indeed, at the present time we easily yield to the erroneous belief that we can lead quite a decent life without having a knowledge of the spiritual world; that is to say, that we can breakfast, etc., and do many things in between … Undoubtedly, it is very easy to believe this at the present time; nevertheless, such a belief is not based upon truth. We should gradually be brought to the point of feeling that such beliefs are not based upon truth. For this reason, I mention a subject such as that of Planck. I mention Planck, that strange man, who lived for many years an extremely lonely life at Ulm and was not even offered a chair at the university of Tübingen, because nobody really understood his true value and significance; the significance of a man concerning whom obtuse persons would certainly say: “Towards the end of his life, he grew so nervous that he said all manner of things that sounded like megalomania.” Well, obtuse men may argue like that. But even someone who had not to endure the sufferings that Planck had to endure, would have grown nervous through the way in which his fellow men treated him, and he would

also have uttered the words which may be found in Planck's introduction to his "Philosophy of Nature and of Mankind", the words of an ancient Roman: "Ungrateful country of mine! You shall not even have my bones!" I am quoting these words purposely; they were uttered in 1889, the year of Planck's death, and they really convey exactly what we tried to explain just now.

The reality could be perceived by a man with idealistic conceptions, because the forces that develop within us when we are able to think in this manner, are, at the same time, the most practical thing in the world. The most practical thing is not at all as imagined by those who believe that they really are in touch with the most practical things in life; this can only be explained through the brutality with which they face life's practical aspects. When I advance such examples, I only advance them in order to show you that all those human forces which are also needed in practical life, can give rise to clear thoughts filled with insight, only if the soul is fertilized by spiritual scientific truths.

Is it possible to-day that people actually believe that human life on earth is possible, without the slightest idea of spiritual scientific truths? Why do people believe such things? — Because they are so terribly short-sighted! If they were not so short-sighted, it would be possible to prove, even in an entirely external way, how mistaken are those who say: "Well,

people simply believe that they need not concern themselves with a spiritual world. They are born without doing anything towards this, and they grow …" Of course, some kind of education must be offered to man. Modern pedagogy is so extremely clever, that it sets up clever principles, reaching the gigantic heights of Forster's pedagogy! And then we gradually become mature men, who concern themselves with the problem of what we should do, in order to give others something to eat and to drink.

Yet it was not always so within the human race. It is not so long ago that the present conditions arose, inducing men to believe that they can live upon the earth without possessing any spiritual knowledge. External proofs may be advanced, in support of this.

Let me advance one of these proofs. Probably, if we had time to spare (but here in Munich, people do not have much time), we might even come across a similar proof here in Munich. At the Museum of Art, in Hamburg we recently discovered a proof that may be advanced externally. It results from the following fact:

Let us bear in mind that great symbol at the beginning of the Old Testament: Adam and Eve's Temptation, what is known to us as the Luciferic temptation. Let us think of this. When a modern painter paints this (his standpoint is quite an

indifferent matter; it is all the same whether he is a realistic or an idealistic painter, an expressionist, impressionist, or futurist), he thinks that the reality can be conveyed best of all if he paints Adam and Eve in a more or less ugly way; between them, he will paint the Tree of Paradise and upon it the Serpent, with a real serpent's head, as large as the Tree. Can this be termed realistic, in the true meaning of the word? I do not think so. Leaving aside the present assumption, it is impossible to believe that the archetypal mother Eve could have been so stupid as to be tempted by a real serpent. Imagine, a real serpent creeping through the green grass should have caught mother Eve! Even the present serpent can only be looked upon as a symbol of something else. Let us recall the thoughts that should really be connected with the Luciferic temptation. The serpent is Lucifer. It can only symbolize Lucifer. The fact that this being remained behind upon the Moon-stage of development, is connected with the Luciferic principle. It is therefore impossible to see Lucifer through physical eyes, for these have only developed upon the earth. Lucifer can only be perceived through the inner eye, and so he cannot resemble an earthly serpent that can be seen through our ordinary earthly eyes. Lucifer should be imagined as spiritual science is able to represent him. Imagine now that man carries upon him his head, as the most perfectly formed member of his body. Attached to it (it suffices if you study a skeleton) is the remaining organism; the spine is attached to the head. Everything that has, later on,

developed physically, was formed in advance. If we go back into evolution, if we were to perceive Lucifer through our inner power of vision, we would see him in the form which he had upon the Moon, when he was preparing the earthly human head, a human head that was not so dense and solid as the present one, for it was inwardly mobile, manifold in its forms, and attached to it was a human spine, a spinal cord, that may be imagined in the form of a serpent's body. Lucifer would, therefore, have to be painted with a countenance as expressive as possible, and attached to it, a serpent's body, but one that resembles the archetypal human spine. This would be a kind of picture of Lucifer.

At the Museum in Hamburg there is a picture by Master Bertram representing a Story, of the Creation, and there the Paradise-symbol is represented in such a way that Lucifer is portrayed as described, exactly in accordance with spiritual science. In the 13th and 14th century, Master Bertram therefore painted Lucifer correctly, in a spiritual-scientific sense. This can be seen; it is a historical fact. We have frequently spoken of the ancient atavistic clairvoyance. What Master Bertram painted, shows that up to the 13th and 14th century it was possible to paint Lucifer correctly, in accordance with an ancient spiritual science. It can therefore be proved, it can be proved externally, that the human beings have become, so abandoned by the spirit as they are now, only a few centuries ago. This can be proved, and you will be

able to discover such proofs.

In other words: What the obtuse people of to-day consider as the everlasting human nature … the fact that they look out into the world through their eyes and then combine the things they see through their intellect, has become a human soul-quality only a few centuries ago. Before that time, man was aware of his connection with the spiritual world. This has faded. But we can learn to know that even in the 13th and 14th century people were still able to paint in such a way that this was in keeping with the ancient spiritual science. It is important to bear in mind such a fact. It shows us that the ancient spiritual science had to vanish for the sake of the development of human freedom, for in the 5th post-atlantean epoch arose something that has often been described: namely, the, consciousness-soul had to develop and consequently the old spiritual science had to recede. But it must be brought back again.

In regard to what constitutes the spirit of invention, the creative spirit, humanity still lives to-day upon the old inheritance in every sphere, upon the old inheritance that entered human evolution with the ancient spiritual science. When someone has a new idea to-day and invents something quite new, he does this because the ancient spiritual science still continues to be active. But in less than a hundred, in less than fifty years time, every kind of invention, every creative

kind of thought shall have disappeared; it shall have disappeared even in the mechanical sphere, unless spiritual science influences humanity in a fruitful way. Spiritual science must begin to penetrate livingly into the development of the human race, for otherwise, the human race must grow barren.

In the sphere of art, this, fact is more or less evident to-day. In art it is strongly evident that the human beings are, as it were, abandoned by the spirit, seeing that they can only weave into their works of art what they find as a model, outside, in Nature; thus the inner fertilization on the part of the spirit is completely lacking.

These facts stand on one side. They show us how necessary it is for the human being to become aware of the fact that he is connected, as a whole human being, with Beings belonging to the higher kingdoms. We may think of people — some still exist to-day — who do not know that air exists. For them, space is empty. At least this fact does not reach their consciousness. After all, the physical body cannot be thought of without the environing air — for what would we be with our physical body without any air! We imagine that the physical body is closed up, because it is enveloped in its skin, — but here is the air outside the body: we breathe it in, and now it is inside us; we breathe it out, and then it is outside. Does not the air belong to the physical body in the same way as the muscles? Do you not have within you what is outside,

and outside what is within? In the same way in which we are connected with the air in regard to our physical body, so we are connected, in regard to our soul-element, with the Beings that weave through the world as Spirits of Form, Spirits of Movement and Thrones; through our astral body we are united with the Beings who weave through the world as spiritual Hierarchies; they are incessantly active in us, just as the air is active within our physical body. If we know this, we have the right kind of consciousness of man's being.

This is one aspect of the matter. But then there is still another aspect. Now I wish to awaken in you a conception of these things, by contemplating them from several aspects, as it is necessary to-day.

Read, for instance, (I might also indicate another example) Dostojevski's "Karamasov Brothers". Four characters appear, among others, in this book: the four sons of the old Karamasov, Ivan, Dmitri, Aljosha, Smerdiakov. It is very strange to see what an influence this novel of Dostojevski had, particularly in Europe. I would have to say many things if I wished to explain the whole way in which such things rise out of human life and pass through a soul such as that of Dostojevski where they develop into a work such as his "Brothers Karamasov". Let me only say this: In spite of the greatest admiration which we may have for the penetrating psychological art (this is the name given to it by many modern

people, because they know so little what psychology really is!), in spite of the penetrating insight of Dostojevski's psychological art, also in spite of his fine and penetrating observation of life, those who have really reached the point of taking up spiritual-scientific conceptions not only in such a way as to say, man consists of physical body, etheric body, astral body and Ego, but so that they are filled with what may be experienced in connection with these members of human nature — those who strive to build up feelings in the way in which we endeavour to do it, will have an uncomfortable feeling when they read the frequently chaotic descriptions of the Karamasov brothers. For this book contains many things that may indeed be designated as fine observations of life, if we simply bear in mind an external, superficial observation of life … for instance the fact that the eldest brother is the son of another mother and has an entirely different character than that of his two younger brothers; the fourth son is again the offspring of another mother (the old Karamasov is namely a thorough scoundrel!), whereas the third son has a most peculiar mother. One does not know if he is really the son of the old Karamasov … But I do not intend to tell you the story of the book. Indeed, if we also bear in mind the aspect, who were the mothers, we may feel throughout: there is something behind all that! In fact, this is so, for a Central-European writer would not describe things in that way; he would describe things far more consciously and thus he would not bring into his description so many sub-conscious factors; as is the case

with Dostojevski, he constructs more, and since he only brings into his book what he more or less knows, his book will not contain such a wealth of things as that of Dostojevski, who takes the things he writes from LIFE.

Life contains more than that which rises up in the consciousness of the human soul. Towards all these things we feel that in the case of Dostojevski we have before us an extremely chaotic mind, rendered chaotic through his epilepsy; but, in spite of this, many things passed through his entirely diseased soul, things which could pass through it, because human nature is, in our time, inclined, as it were, to reveal certain Things. We may then come to the following result: If we have acquired the right kind of feeling, the right kind of idea in regard to what is meant by physical body, etheric body, astral body and Ego, we shall find in the four Karamasov brothers four human beings who can only be understood in the right way if we say to ourselves: In one of them, we have before us a human being in whom the physical body is specially active; in the other one, a human being in whom the etheric body is particularly active; in the third one, a human being in whom the astral body is more active; and in the fourth one, a human being in whom the Ego is more active. It is indeed so: If you take the Karamasov brothers and study them from an inner aspect, you will be able to say that, in accordance with. the present cycle of human evolution, and in a case where everything is active in such a way that the

poet is influenced and stimulated to describe things more from out his sub-consciousness, the various members of human nature are active so that in one brother one particular member has the upper hand, and in another one, another member; the four brothers therefore appear like the drawn-out image of humanity. In Dmitri we find that the Ego is preponderant; in Aljosha, the astral body; in Ivan, the etheric body; and in Smerdiakov, the physical body. Though at first this may seem strange, it is nevertheless so, from the standpoint of reality.

You see, here we have the strange case of a poet who produces chiefly from out his sub-conscious depths and even has a chaotic soul life owing to his epilepsy, but who is nevertheless pushed towards the reality and whose astral body, that is to say, his sub-consciousness, becomes connected with what weaves and lives in the world.

We may well believe that the experience of standing beneath the gallows and. being unexpectedly pardoned at the last minute (Dostojevski's comrades have already been hung, while Dostojevski himself is facing the moment of being hung), is not an indifferent experience; indeed, such an experience awakens in a human soul altogether different feelings than those of a soul that has never passed through a similar experience. This is a fact that should be borne in mind. But all this shows us that at the present time, in particular, a soul of Dostojevski's kind could be influenced by the real facts

in such a manner that his soul felt induced to describe throughout his book, in a chaotic way, these four brothers, who possess the qualities just described, whom we can only understand if we know this and if we are able to feel it. In that case, we shall understand why the brother in whom the etheric body predominates and the one in whom the astral body predominates, must be the sons of a mother afflicted with hysterical fits. If we know this, the details in particular become wonderfully transparent. This reveals the tendency of our time within the sphere of a nation inclined to offer (I have already explained this to you), as it were, those blood qualities which must become united with the Central European qualities. We can grasp what is taking place, also in the case of men in whom these events are still inwoven unconsciously; but we can grasp this only if we understand spiritual science.

Even though it may seem stupid, let me nevertheless say that the world is deep, and that it is not such a simple matter to gain some knowledge in regard to it, nor to judge it; it is not so simple a matter as imagined by those who lead the usual kind of life. The human beings pass through life in a dream or in a state of intoxication. Yet great things are preparing and it is not so easy to attract people's, attention to these things.

Through your Karma you belong to those who are gradually penetrating into these things; you have been listening to them for many years and have thus gradually become familiar with

them, acquiring an idea of all that lies concealed beneath the surface of life. But in regard to outsiders: — we may sometimes allude to such things in their presence and the very people may be sitting there, who belong to the clever set and believe, above all, that the person who speaks in a spiritual-Scientific manner and mentions this or that thing to them, does not really know anything beyond what he is saying. They have not the slightest idea that this knowledge must be drawn out of an all-encompassing knowledge, one that can really be proved in every detail and that becomes interesting just when it can be substantiated through details.

That many things in human evolution must change, can be seen therein that I have put before you two facts: I have shown you, on the one hand, what is connected with the human being, but on the other hand, I have also shown you the way in which we should contemplate the events that are now taking place. If someone who knows nothing of microscopy looks through a microscope, he will see nothing whatever. In a similar way, nothing whatever can be discerned when we contemplate human experience. Nothing whatever can be discerned in the experiences of the East during the 19th century; nothing can be seen in a Dostojevski, who wrote the book, “The Brothers Karamasov”, a book that indicates a sub-earthly element. In the East, in the Russian East, people have become aware of this, for a certain attitude towards life has been designated, as “Karamasovshchina”. It

is difficult to explain this word; it is a far more qualitative concept than, for instance, the word “Strizitum” (a word in Austrian dialect, indicating a loose, half rascally, half good-fellow attitude towards life). “Karamasovshchina” is a far more concrete thing. We may come across this in life itself and even in art, and in order to perceive what is taking place, it is easy to realise that when we contemplate things, it is necessary to have in our soul’s background a knowledge that can only come from spiritual science.

Even the external processes rising up before us at the present time in particular, reveal this necessity; if we only look upon life thoughtfully, they reveal the necessity to which I allude and which I illuminated from two aspects. For instance, a very distressing phenomenon of the present is the following one: — General opinions existed long before the war. Certain people were considered to be prominent in this or in that sphere. There was no reason to object to this because they really achieved extraordinary things in the meaning of modern civilisation. Then war broke out. These prominent people expressed their views, they wrote letters. It is almost incredible what nonsense these prominent men wrote! For instance, Krapotkin, who enjoyed a great reputation in England. But read the letters written by him at the beginning of the war! He was looked upon as a broad-minded free-thinker, yet how stupid were the letters he wrote!

These are weighty facts. Indeed, I might say: Particularly now that humanity is facing such a sudden and powerful situation, we can see how little their thoughts are capable of grasping something that does not, for once, break in upon mankind in accordance with an ordinary, easy programme. From their own standpoint, the ordinary Philistines are better off than others, for they judge things in accordance with their views. But how do these views generally arise? At the present time, people despise authority and have their own views! Yet their opinions are merely based upon the fact that they have forgotten where they have read them! These are the "individual opinions", that are simply characterised through the fact that they have been read or heard somewhere. All these things show that particularly the so deeply incisive events of the present contain something that must become a distinctive mark of humanity: namely, the fact that many, many things in spiritual life must change completely; human beings must make up their mind not to pass through life in the same way as the materialists, who merely dream of the world … Of course, they think that the others are dreaming, nevertheless it is THEY who really dream, for they have never really woken up properly. Spiritual life must indeed change, and this fact must penetrate into the consciousness of those who wish to become united in their heart with the true life-essence of the spiritual-scientific world-conception.

Earnest words had to be said at this meeting, simply

because to-day things present such an aspect that every opportunity must be used which may, perhaps, not always be available. It is difficult to travel about, at present.

It is therefore necessary to discuss these earnest things. They are also connected with questions discussed on previous occasions, questions that may be considered in connection with those of to-day. I explained that our etheric body is not something that may be designated as the bearer of our thoughts; it does not simply evaporate: no, the etheric body does not evaporate … it becomes inwoven with the world-ether. When, however, as is the case at present, hundreds and thousands of deaths prevent human beings from carrying their etheric bodies through several decades, as would be the case normally, when these etheric bodies are handed over to the spiritual world, then something arises which I have frequently described: They remain here, with that part of the etheric body which may still have been used, and this will be found ABOVE. But its INFLUENCE in the future will depend upon the constitution of the souls BELOW. Strength for a spiritual progress will in future be found by those souls below who say to themselves: Many men have passed through the sacrifice of death and if we grow conscious of the forces contained in what they leave behind, then a spiritual growth will be possible. Souls must be there who are open to the comprehension of the spiritual world. In that case, the forces existing through the death-sacrifices can

become fruitful for the earth. Otherwise, they must fall a prey to Ahriman. It need not NECESSARILY arise that these forces become fruitful for the earth … for this will depend either upon the greatest possible number of souls that are inclined to unite in their feelings with what has arisen spiritually through the death-sacrifices; it will depend upon the possibility of utilising this later on, or else it will depend upon whether this will fall a prey to Ahriman. Meditate this thought, for then it will acquire significance and you will be able to feel the words with which I once more wish to conclude my lecture:

From the courage of the fighters,
From the blood of the battles,
From the suffering of the abandoned,
From the nation's deeds of sacrifice,
Shall spring forth a Spirit-fruit,
If souls, in spirit-consciousness,
Lead their heart and mind into the Spirit-realm.